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The Origin of the Magic Square

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Magical Squares were first discovered in ancient China, circa 650 BC. At that time they were regarded as symbols of the intertwined harmonies and complexities of the Universe. Some mathematicians and scientists still see them the same way today.

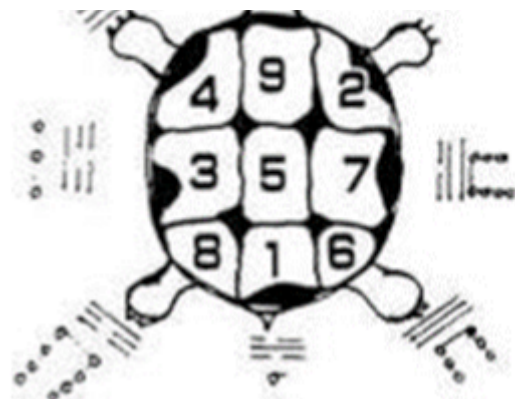
The very first Magic Square was called the Lo Shu Square. It came to fruition during a massive flood. The Emperor Yu was valiantly trying to redirect the excess water back out to sea. While attempting to do so, he happened upon a turtle with a rather strange pattern on its shell.

It looked a little something like this:

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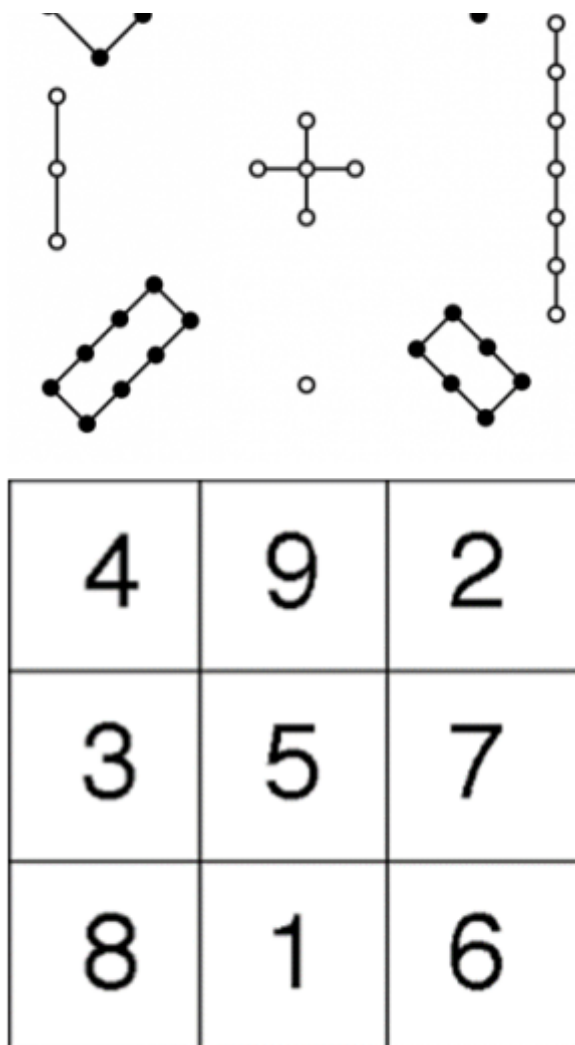
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The traditional symbolic form of the Lo Shu Square is shown below, along with the 3 x 3 equivalent.

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The Magic Sum happens to be the number of days in the cycles of the Chinese solar year.

The Chinese believed that the even numbers in the Lo Shu square represented Yin, the female principle of the Universe, and that the odd numbers represented

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these are ideas that are still prominent in Eastern culture today, even creeping into scientific methodologies that the West uses to describe moods and personalities.

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The Lo Shu Magic Square was also referred to as the Magic Square of Saturn.

There were other groupings of the numbers representing the five Chinese elements, (Earth, Fire, Metal, Water & Wood). These are highlighted below:

The Magic Sum happens to be the number of days in the cycles of the Chinese solar year.

South					
			4 Wood	9 Fire	2 Earth
			3 Wood	5 Earth	7 Metal
East				West	
			8 Earth	1 Water	6 Metal
			North		

So the Chinese were first to discover the Magic Square. But its evolution over the next few thousands of years have taken it to new levels.

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